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Manuscripts & Folklife Archives
 Department of Library Special Collections
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Descriptive Inventory

MSS 567 MYERS, Rodes Kirby, 1900-1960

3 boxes. 15 folders. 215 items. 1910-1957. Originals, photos and photocopies

2007.86.14

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Rodes Kirby Myers was born in Bowling Green, Kentucky, on 29 June 1900, the son of W.H. and Helen (Kirby) Myers. He attended the public schools in Bowling Green prior to enrolling at Ogden College. He then matriculated at the University of Cincinnati Law School, and the University of Kentucky Law School, where he received his law degree in 1925. He taught at Ogden College in 1920 and then taught and coached football at Morganfield High School. He began practicing law in Bowling Green in 1925. Myers father was active in local politics and Rodes followed his example, serving as commonwealth attorney for the 6th Judicial District in 1933, state representative from 1934 to 1939 and in 1945, and state senator from 1948 to 1950. He served as lieutenant governor under Governor Keen Johnson from 1939 to 1943. One of his most notable trials was the defense of Henry Hardin Denhardt for the murder of Verna Garr Taylor in 1936. A life-long Democrat, Myers served as a Kentucky delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1936, 1940, 1944, 1948 and 1956.

While Governor Johnson attended the inauguration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1941, Acting Governor Myers used his powers to pardon two men and commute the sentences of two others who had been convicted for their parts in the 1931 Battle of Evarts, one of the bloodiest skirmishes during the period when the United Mine Workers were organizing in eastern Kentucky. Myers sought the Democratic nomination for governor in 1943, but lost to Lyter Donaldson, who in turn lost to Republican Simeon S. Willis in the final race.

Myers married Beulah Gardner (1903-1956) of Bowling Green, then Mary Lou Hubbard (1920-1998) of Hodgenville; both these unions ended in divorce. On 29 June 1942, he married Neill Mohead and they had three children. Myers died on 10 March 1960 of cancer and was interred in Bowling Green's Fairview Cemetery.

COLLECTION NOTE

This collection contains material that chiefly documents Rodes Kirby Myers' political career. Box 1 contains an assortment of items, including (Folder 2) a scrapbook which contains a few items from Myers' childhood and a larger number of clippings and other ephemera from

his college days at Ogden College in Bowling Green. This scrapbook was copied and then given to WKU Archives which houses other material related to Ogden College. Some original photographs and other paper items were retained with this photocopy. Folders 3-5 of Box 1 contain a continuously numbered scrapbook of clippings related to the Taylor murder case and Myers' role as defense attorney for Henry Herman Denhardt. Folder 5 is only a photocopy; the other two sections which were originally in notebooks were retained in their original form but were removed from the notebooks. Articles are pasted on front and verso of every page. Folder 6 contains a small amount of correspondence, chiefly related to Myers marriage to Neill Mohed in 1942. The photographs in Folder 7 chiefly feature Myers with other politicians or at cocktail parties; one photograph of note is dated 8 June 1942 and includes Senator A.B. "Happy" Chandler, Myers and Bing Crosby joining together in song for an U.S. Army show at Fort Knox. The first item in Folder 7 is a color caricature of Myers signed by "Joseph." Many of the news clippings in Folder 8 were loose items that had fallen out of the various scrapbooks; all of these were photocopied on acid free paper. Folder 9 includes invitations and programs from various political and social events as well as a few paper items from Myers' run for the governorship in 1943. Folder 10 includes the contents of a "Delegate's Kit" for an attendee to the 1948 Democratic National Convention in 1948. Folder 10 also includes a 1940 delegate's pass for Mr. Myers as well as a broadside touting Alben W. Barkley for president in 1948.

Box 2 contains 44 speeches given by Myers from 1939 to 1957, many of which are political in nature but there are commencement addresses as well as patriotic speeches. Of interest are speeches opening his campaigns for Lieutenant Governor in 1939 and Governor in 1943 and a World War II bond rally appeal found in Folder 1. Folder 3 contains undated speeches but two to them deal with the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1945. Other speeches of note include a vitriolic radio address in which he speaks candidly about some local and state politicians (Item #3), his evaluation of presidential candidate Adlai E. Stevenson (Item #8), and his views on disarmament and Communism (Item #10). His political speeches are partisan and curt.

Box 3 contains two bound scrapbooks of clippings, photographs, correspondence, programs, etc., chiefly related to Myers' political career from 1939 to 1941. The photographs in Box 1, Folder 7 were removed from these scrapbooks, because the staples that held them in place were easily removed. Photographs that were pasted down were left in the scrapbooks.

SHELF LIST

BOX 1	<i>Scrapbooks, correspondence, photos, etc.</i>	1910-1951	167 items
Folder 1	Inventory		1 item
Folder 2	Boyhood – Ogden College scrapbook (Photocopy)	1910-1928	1 item (130 p.)
Folder 3	Scrapbook about Denhardt trial	1936-1937	1 item (p. 1-67)
Folder 4	Scrapbook about Denhardt trial	1937	1 item (p. 68-136)

Folder 5	Scrapbook about Denhardt trial (Photocopy only)	1937	1 item (p. 137-200)
Folder 6	Correspondence	1924-1951	30 items
Folder 7	Photographs	1942; n.d.	18 items
Folder 8	News clippings (Photocopies)	1939-1947	89 items
Folder 9	Miscellaneous – Invitations, programs, political memorabilia, certificate	1939-1949	18 items
Folder 10	Delegates kit given at the 1948 Democratic National Convention and Mr. Myers personal identification card from the 1940 Democratic National Convention	1940; 1948	19 items
BOX 2	Speeches	1939-1957	44 items
Folder 1	Speeches	1939-1944	13 items
Folder 2	Speeches	1945-1957	12 items
Folder 3	Speeches	n.d.	19 items
BOX 3	Scrapbooks	1939-1942	2 items
Folder 1	Scrapbook	1939-1940	1 item
Folder 2	Scrapbook	1940-1941	1 item

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

MSS MYERS, Rodes Kirby, 1910-1957
567 1900-1960

Correspondence, speeches and scrapbooks related to the life of Rodes Kirby Myers, Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky from 1939 to 1943. Includes clippings and speeches from political campaigns.

Also includes three scrapbooks of clippings related to the trial of Henry Herman Denhardt for the murder of Verna Garr Taylor in 1936.

3 boxes. 15 folders. 215 items. Originals, photos and photocopies.

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SUBJECT ANALYTICS

Barkley, Alben William, 1877-1956 B1,F6
Barkley, Alben William, 1877-1956 – Comments about B1,F10; B2,F3
Beverly Hills Country Club – Newport – Relating to B1,F9
Brown, John Young, Sr., 1900-1985 – Comments about B2,F2-3
Certificates B1,F9
Chandler, Albert Benjamin "Happy," 1888-1981 – Comments about B2,F2-3
Chandler, Albert Benjamin "Happy," 1888-1981 – Photos B1,F7
Child labor – Comments about, 1924 B1,F6
Clements, Earle Chester, 1896-1985 – Comments about B2,F3
Combs, Bertram Thomas, 1911-1991 – Comments about B2,F3
Commencement addresses B2,F1,3
Communism – Comments about B2,F3
Crosby, Harry Lillis "Bing," 1903-1977 – Photos B1,F7
Democratic National Convention, 1940 – Relating to B1,F10
Democratic National Convention, 1948 – Relating to B1,F10
Denhardt, Henry Herman, 1876-1937 – Relating to B1,F3-5
Elections and political campaigns, 1948 B1,F10
Elections and political campaigns – Kentucky, 1939, 1943 B1,F9; B2,F1
Harman, James Lewie, 1874-1960 B1,F6
Henderson, Arthur B1,F6
Inn by the Sea – Pass Christian, Mississippi – Relating to B1,F6
Invitations B1,F9
Lieutenant governors B2,F1
Logan, Rex A., 1902-1973 – Comments about B2,F3
McElroy, Clarence Underwood, 1849-1928
Milliken, George Duncan, Sr., 1877-1967 – Comments about B2,F3
Myers, Rodes Kirby, 1900-1950 – Caricatures B1,F7

Myers, Rodes Kirby, 1900-1960 – Photos B1,F7
 Natcher, William Huston, 1909-1994 – Comments about B2,F3
 Ogden College – Bowling Green – Relating to B2,F1
 Patriotism – Comments about B2,F1
 Race relations – Comments about, 1924 B1,F6
 Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, 1882-1945 – Comments about, 1945 B2,F2-3
 Scrapbooks B1,F2-5; B3,F1-2
 Speeches B2,F1-3
 Stevenson, Adlai Ewing, II, 1900-1965 – Comments about B2,F3
 Taylor, Verna Garr, d. 1936 – Relating to B1,F3-5
 Whitaker, John Albert, 1901-1951– Comments about
 World War II, 1939-1945 – Comments about B2,F3
 World War II, 1939-1945 – Rationing B2,F3
 World War II, 1939-1945 – Relating to B1,F6; B2,F1

SEE and SEE ALSO

Beverly Hills Supper Club – Newport

See also:

Beverly Hills Country Club

Beverly Hills Nightclub – Newport

See also:

Beverly Hills Country Club

Crosby, Bing, 1903-1977

See:

Crosby, Harry Lillis “Bing,” 1903-1977

Jeffrey 02/06/2016